Approved For Release 2006/04/13 : CIA-RDP72-00039R000100360003-7

21 November 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Support Operations Staff

SUBJECT : Annual Records Management Conference

1. I attended the annual Records Management Conference at the [redacted] on 13 and 14 November 1969 as the representative of the O-DD/S. I would like to pass on (for your information and any action you may deem appropriate) some ideas of mine developed at the session. I will be glad to discuss these with anyone with the view that this is a new business to me and I may be off-base on some or all of the suggestions.

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2. The Program was well organized and efficiently run. It is a difficult subject at best and the dedication of the group was most impressive. The professionalism of the key people is obvious and they seem to know their business. All in all I feel that in spite of much lack of interest on the part of many Agency personnel, the Records Management group is making real progress.

3. It appears there are still misunderstandings and lack of understanding among the various Directorates. This seems especially acute between the DD/P and other groups. Some type of interchange of records officers between DD/P and the other Offices to include the Records Administration Branch of SSS would aid this problem. This would insure more understanding of similar and different problems and develop a confidence between Directorates in their related work.

4. Some concern was expressed about the fact that many of the Records Management Officers are not full time. Undoubtedly the job is not full time in all organizational elements but it would seem wise to assign someone full time at least until he worked himself out of such a job. There was very limited discussion about the possibility of an RMO career service. Offhand I would recommend against such a change at this time to avoid the complications of establishing and having accepted a new career group.

5. Some type of Agency-wide records training would be helpful. DD/P already has various courses in this field including a general one for Records Management Officers. I dont believe the Agency has such courses. As a start I would suggest a two-level training program. The first keyed to Records Officers or potential records officers including a great deal of detail and actual practice in making decisions and completing forms on sample Agency files. The second

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level should be keyed to those many officers throughout the Agency who need to have a speaking knowledge of the Records problem and Records management procedures, i. e., Support Officers and Branch Chiefs. The basics of filing, when to retire and when to destroy are examples of the items which might be covered. External courses given through local universities were suggested at the Conference, but we need internal courses - courses in which specific files are discussed and problems studied. The outside courses are of very definite value but are not on target for the vast majority of our people. They would be most valuable for the more senior professionals in the Records field.

6. The feeling now is that top management at long last sees the need for a good Records Management Program and even though budget cuts are a problem the situation is so critical some action is imminent. It was noted by Mr. Bannerman that for the first time in 20 years the Records Center has shown a net gain in space. This in itself indicates that the Records Program is taking hold. There is much new equipment available to save space and personnel and improve efficiency. Although it all costs money, this is an alternative to increased TO's and new construction.

7. In the Immediate Office of the DD/S, the Records Management Officer should attend these Conferences if at all possible. In addition it would seem wise to have another representative from the Office. This would broaden the staff's knowledge of records problems and would indicate an added interest from the DD/S level especially to the Agency Records Management Officers. The Office of the DD/S needs to know both the Agency problems and the people involved in solving those problems.

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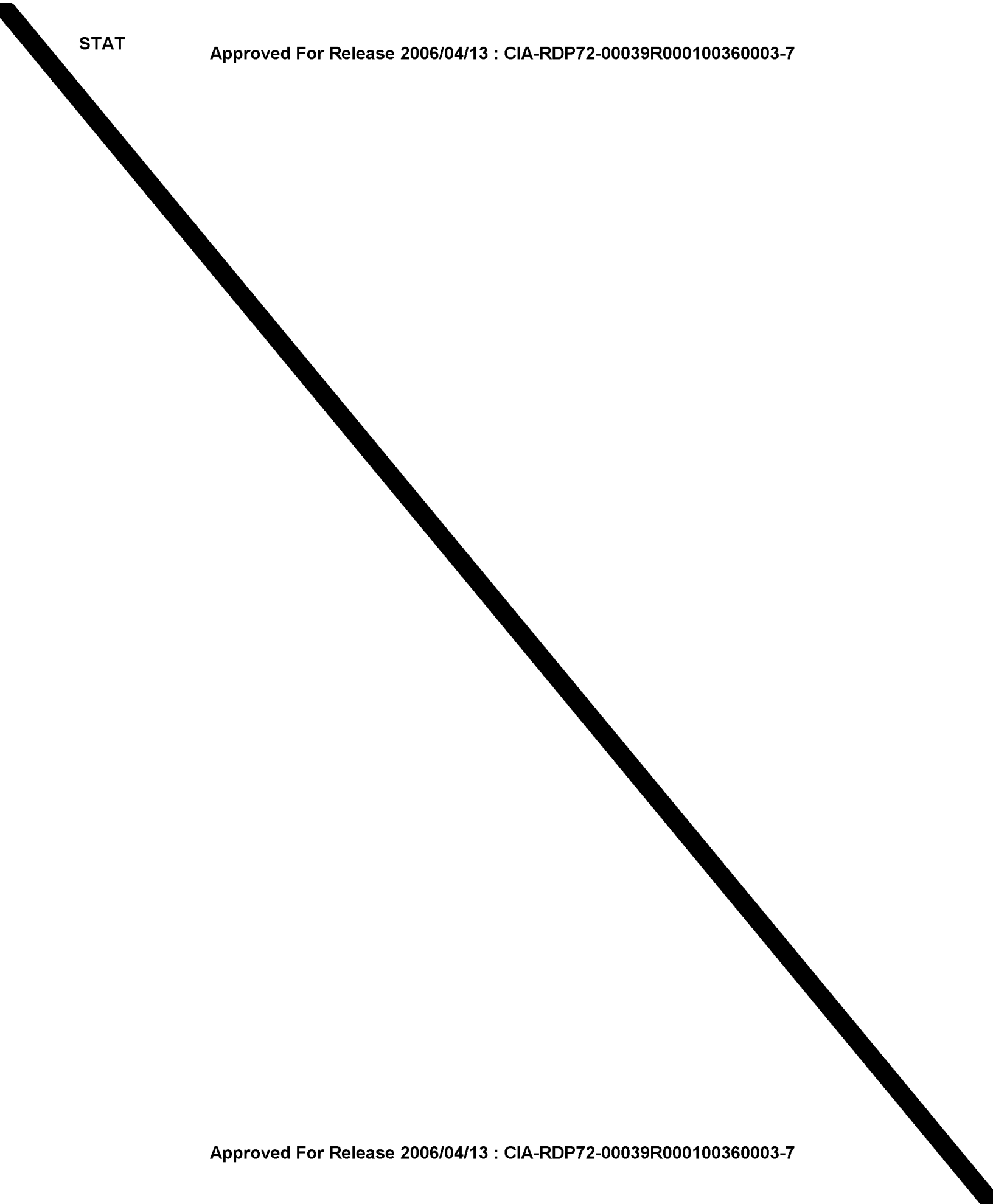

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